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GEORGIA

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SAYLOR COMPANY

PUBLIC RELATIONS COUNSEL

September 4, 2009

The Honorable Jeanne Sheehan
The Honorable Jim DeMint
European and Asian Affairs Subcommittee
United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators:

Please find attached a letter from His Excellency Murat Kuzmich Dzioev, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Ossetia, which I send to you on his behalf.

If you wish, I remain available to you or your staffs to answer what questions I can or to pass along to the Minister any thoughts you may have.

Best regards,

Steve Ellis
Principal
202-715-1448
steven.ellis@saylorcompany.com

cc:

The Honorable Chris Dodd
The Honorable Bob Menendez
The Honorable Bob Casey, Jr.
The Honorable Jim Webb
The Honorable Ted Kaufman
The Honorable Jim Risch
The Honorable Bob Corker
The Honorable Roger Wicker

The Honorable Hillary Clinton
The Honorable Phillip Gordon

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The Honorable Jeanne Sheehan
The Honorable Jim DeMint
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
European Affairs Subcommittee
Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-6225
USA

Dear Chairwoman Sheehan and Ranking Member DeMint:

The hearing you recently held, marking the first anniversary of the 8 August 2008 war in South Ossetia was both interesting and troubling to us in the Republic of South Ossetia. We welcome the Subcommittee's continuing interest in what happens in the Caucasus area, yet we believe you do not have the complete picture.

We in South Ossetia know well that the United States supports Georgia as an ally. The complex geopolitical ramifications of that alliance unfortunately often overshadow the voices and desires of the South Ossetian people.

South Ossetians, of course, want peace and stability. I believe you do as well. Having seen the horror and destruction from Georgian attacks on our civilian population and infrastructure—from the war a year ago and from previous military actions—I can assure you that we abhor the possibility of further hostilities.

Honorable Senators, I can assure you that after the havoc Georgia wrought upon our people last August, South Ossetians never want to be part of Georgia. During that calculated onslaught, Georgia's U.S. trained soldiers killed innocent civilians and destroyed hundreds of hospitals, churches, schools, private homes, and more than 80 percent of our commercial capacity. Because of that brutality, reunification with Georgia is simply impossible.

Assistant Secretary of State Philip Gordon testified at your hearing that the United States Government has limited ability to gauge the situation on the ground here in South Ossetia. He told Senator Wicker that is it difficult to measure public opinion about South Ossetians wanting to be part of Georgia in the future.

Frankly, my Government disputes much of the information contained in Assistant Secretary Gordon's testimony as well as that of the other U.S. Government officials, who also testified. Much of what they state as fact is simply incorrect.

If the United States Government wants to learn the truth about what happened last August, and the impact that Georgia's continuing hostility has had on our people, its representatives should come see for themselves. I invite you, members of your staffs, Assistant Secretary Gordon, and other U.S. Government officials to come to South Ossetia.

The South Ossetian Government welcomes you to visit us and talk to our people about their dreams and aspirations. You can meet and interview public and private sector South Ossetians who are working to rebuild the destruction of war and to overcome the oppression they suffered under Georgian rule, which was forced upon them by Joseph Stalin.

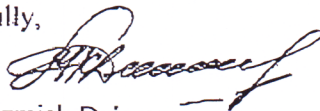
Our citizens, like those everywhere, have different views on how successful we have been at achieving success in rebuilding our nation in the past year. When you come here, you can speak with them directly just as several American journalists did when they were in Tskhinval to cover our commemoration of the 2008 war. You may have seen that reporting from outlets such as The New York Times, Bloomberg, AP, and Reuters. Those journalists worked freely and without restriction.

I believe strongly that if we could share South Ossetia's views of the situation here that you would gain the benefit of a broader perspective upon which to formulate U.S. Government policy. You may not accept what we have to say but not hearing it at all, seems to me, Senators, a tragic mistake. I believe that is the point Senator Wicker was trying to make.

I hope that you will give my invitation every positive consideration in the name of the fairness and objectivity the American people so value.

I look forward to your response.

Respectfully,



Murat Kuzmich Dzioev
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Republic of South Ossetia